Rural Banks have also extended debt relief to 7.90 lakh farmers and 0.35 lakh landless agricultural labourers in that State. The maximum amount of relief provided under the Scheme to each individual borrower is restricted to Rs. 10,000. The Scheme came to a close on 31-3-1991 in the State of Gujarat and the debt relief was provided by banks concerned to all eligible borrowers and not by Government. Government of India undertook to reimburse the public sector banks and Regional Rural Banks the amount of debt relief provided by them under the Scheme and also undertook to provide 50 per cent of the debt relief provided by the cooperative banks as grant and the other 50 per cent of the debt relief was provided by Reserve Bank of India through the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development by way of loans at a concessional rate of interest to the co-operative banks.

(e) As per the provisions of the Scheme, only the following categories of the borrowers who availed of loans for undertaking agricultural activities including horticulture, forestry, dairy and animal husbandry, poultry farming, pisciculture, etc. and rural artisan activities including weaving, would be eligible for debt relief, if any one of undernoted conditions is satisfied :—

(i) All overdues as on 2nd October, 1986 and outstanding as on 2nd October, 1989 would be eligible for relief irrespective of occurrence of bad crop years.

(ii) In case of overdues which had arisen after 2nd October, 1986 and outstanding as on 2nd October, 1989, relief would be provided if the borrower had experienced two bad crop years, either consecutive or not, during 1987, 1988 and 1989, and the defaults had occurred during the bad crop years.

(ii) The loans outstanding as on 2nd October, 1989 of a borrower, who had expired on or before 2nd October, 1989 irrespective of experiencing the bad crop year.

(iv) The overdue loans outstanding as on 2nd October, 1989 of a borrower, who had been declared insolvent or whose petition was pending in the Court as on 2nd October, 1989, irrespective of bad crop years, for being declared insolvent.

(v) In the case of rural artisan activities, overdues as on 2nd October, 1989 which had arisen on account of loss of assets would be eligible for relief.

MERGER OF DA AS DP

2550. SHRI VIREN J. SHAH

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN : Will the Minister of Finance be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to merge 20 per cent of D.A. as dearness pay payable to Central Government employees with effect from 16th September 1993;

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard;

(c) from which date the question of merger of a part of DA has been under the consideration of Government;

(d) whether there is any proposal to make the merger of DA as DP effective from 1st January, 1993 for the benefit of Central Government employees who retired from 1st of January, 1993; and

(e) if not, what are the reasons therefor and on what criterion the order has been made effective from 16th September, 1993?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) and (b) The necessary Govt. orders have since been issued for treatment of dearness allowance equal to 20 per cent of basic pay as dearness pay for the purpose of death-cum-retirement gratuity alone in respect of Central Govt. employees retiring or dying on or after 16-9-93.

(c) to (e) The demand for treatment of a portion of dearness allowance as dearness pay for certain purposes was raised by the Staff Side of the National Council (JCM) in the meeting of the National Council held on 31-1-91. However, the decision referred to in (a) & (b) above, was arrived at on the basis of an understanding between the Official Side and the Staff Side in their deliberations held in September, 1993 and, therefore, may not now be given a retrospective operation.

REDISCOUNTING OF EXPORT BILLS ABROAD

2551. SHRI VIREN J. SHAH:

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be to state:

(a) whether Reserve Bank of India has issued guidelines to the authorised dealers in India for extending the facility of rediscounting of export bills abroad to exporters;

(b) if so, what are the details of the guidelines;

(c) whether the prior permission of Reserve Bank of India is not required for arranging re-discounting facility abroad; if so, what are the details in this regard; and

(d) what are the details of cases in which Reserve Bank of India's permission is required ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (DR. ABRAR AHMED) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has reported that the facility of rediscounting of export bills abroad to exporters will be an additional window available to them alongwith the existing methods of finance at post-shipment stage. The facility will be available in all convertible currencies. The scheme will cover export bills upto 180 days from the date of shipment (inclusive of normal transit period and grace period). The effective cost (excluding withholding tax) to the exporters should not exceed 2 per cent and 2.5 per cent over 6 months LIBOR in respect of 'with recourse' and 'without recourse' facility respectively. In case of rediscounting of export bills on 'with recourse' basis, the credit limits of the exporters will be restored immediately.

(c) Prior permission of the RBI is not required for arranging the rediscounting facility abroad so long as spread for rediscounting does not exceed 1 per cent over the 6 months LIBOR in case of rediscounting 'with recourse' basis and 1.5 per cent in case of 'without recourse' facility. Spread, however, will be exclusive of any withholding tax.

(d) RBI has reported that in all cases other than stated in (c) above, their prior permission will be needed

EXCISE DUTY ON ELECTRONIC TYPEWRITERS AND COMPUTERS

2552. SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU:

SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR:

SHRI RAMSINH RATHWA :

SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA :

Will the Minister of Finance be pleased to states.